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WyngateCare 
Your life Your choice

SESSION 8

Integration

INTEGRATION

During the past 7 sessions, a variety of themes and exercises were explored. Undoubtedly, the experience was different for everyone. We have differing experiences of which exercises we found useful, what information offered the most insight, what we found difficult or what we liked. An important question for each one of us is: what is next? There is a wise expression that says that the last meeting lasts for the rest of your life. And that is true. Mindfulness is a process that develops infinitely over time. In this final session we will reflect on what has been learned and we will integrate the previous themes with each other. We will also reflect on how this knowledge and experience can be integrated into your life after this training.



INTEGRATING THE SEVEN THEMES

Although the 7 themes were introduced separately, in reality they form an inseparable entity. Together they form the concept of mindfulness. In this section we will map the links between the themes.

SESSION 1: ATTENTION AND THE NOW

We started with attention for a good reason; attention is the most fundamental building block of change and insight. Attention ensures that we are aware. If we are not aware of something, we cannot change it. Thus, by learning to consciously regulate attention, we become aware of our automated actions (2). This allows us to make new choices. Attention is necessary to become aware of the fact that we judge (3), that we avoid or stick to situations or feelings or fight them (4), that we are too attached to the busyness of our goals (5) or that we are mercilessly critical to ourselves or others (6). Without



attention we can never see how our identification with things affects us. Attention is required to see through our ego and to limit its influence. If our attention is not judgmentally focused on the experience of the moment, then we can become a direct observer. This observer is the non-ego (7).

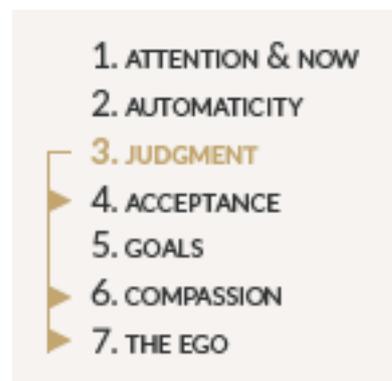
SESSION 2: AUTOMATICITY

Automatisms keeps us from changing. Only by becoming aware of our automatisms, we can change them. All the themes that have been discussed concern automatisms. Without knowing, we often live in the future or the past (1), we judge (3), we create a struggle (4) we are too focused on goals (5) and the critical voice asks for our attention (6). Without being aware of it, we identify with things like our appearance and status, and create a story about who we are, which automatically influences our thinking, actions and feelings.



SESSION 3: JUDGMENT

By judging we often create an immediate conflict or struggle (4). If we judge a certain feeling as “bad” or “undesirable”, this causes a conflict between how things are now (bad) and how they should be (good). The judgment is also strongly reflected in our critical voice (6). It is this voice that convicts others or ourselves of failing. A judgment often comes from our ego (7).



SESSION 4: ACCEPTANCE

By struggling with the moment, by saying “no” to what is happening in the here and now, the moment may not be there anymore.

The attention does not dwell in the now (1), but rather in the future. The future becomes the place where we can achieve our goal (5). This goal can be to feel better, to be happier, to be released from something, to be more successful. By making the moment an enemy, you make the ego stronger; your mind can identify with you as a victim in this undesirable situation or conflict. Your mind fabricates stories about the current state. This is your ego talking. By adopting/accepting what is, you immediately



free yourself from the identification of your mind. Acceptance allows the ego to be silent.

SESSION 5: GOALS

By focusing too much on our goals, we lose attention to the here and now (1). If you are unable to achieve goals, resistance and struggle are likely (4). We do not want the current situation to be true. We can hardly accept that we did not achieve our goals. An inevitable consequence is often the critical, compassionless voice in our head that judges us (6). Goals can also arise from our ego (7). In that case, we strive to achieve certain goals because we expect that these goals can add something to our identity (becoming better, richer, more important). On our way to achieving the goal, the goal becomes more important than the path to the goal.



SESSION 6: COMPASSION

By increasing compassion for others and ourselves the separation between us and others gets smaller. Our ego creates a separation with others through the stories we create about ourselves and others. Instead of focusing on the differences with others based on your identifications, compassion helps us see the similarities with others. You see what connects you to others. The tendency to judge others as negative will decrease (3) and we reduce the influence of our ego (7).

Please note that the above is only a brief description to show how the themes relate to each other. There are many more subtle connections between each theme to make, but we have shown only the most important connections.



THE END OF THE BEGINNING

This training can best be considered a start. What has been learned and experienced in the past weeks can be a starting point for further development. Mindfulness is not something that you have achieved after 8 weeks. You cannot become mindful, you can only be mindful.

By practicing and applying these concepts, the effects will be stronger and it will be easier to be mindful. In other words, the more mindfulness is integrated into your daily life, the greater the impact will be. During the training, a number of exercises were discussed. Not only formal exercises, such as the body scan and the seated meditation, but also exercises that can easily be integrated into your daily living, such as working with more attention or mindful eating.

PRACTICE: WHAT'S NEXT?

As noted previously, the last session lasts for the rest of your life. If you decide to maintain living in a more mindful way or to develop it further, it may be useful to reflect on how you could integrate mindfulness into your everyday life after this course. Experience has shown that setting up a regular time to practice will help you integrate the exercise. Completing this exercise can help to integrate these practices into your daily life. Perhaps see it as an appointment you make with yourself.

I choose to continue doing the following exercises, at the following times, for the following durations:

“I’m going to do the following to ensure this”:

* Here you can consider actions to make the exercises easier or more enjoyable. For example, to adjust your routine to get up a little earlier, to meditate with a friend, to choose a private place in your house or one you can set up.